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not used

NSC BRIEFING

24 February 1959

NEAR EAST DEVELOPMENTS

- I. In Iraq, rumors circulating of action being organized in the north against Qasim regime, with "cue" to be given by Nasir.
- A. Iraqi ambassador in Cairo, a pro-UAR man, says an "underground" is being created with army "standing firm" against the Communists.
- B. However, there is very little real evidence of such an organized effort, even though there remains, as there has been for months, considerable dissatisfaction with Qasim's excessive toleration of the Communists.
- C. This attitude of Qasim's toward Communists has not changed, despite repeated assurances from lower-level officials that it would.
1. Communist press still has free play, continuing virulent attacks on US.
 2. Communist "workers" demonstration organized apparently with official blessing, to offset celebrations of anniversary of formation of UAR.
 3. Communists permitted by police and army to harass guests at UAR embassy celebration on 22nd.
- II. Nasir unable so far to change trends in Iraq to his liking, seems to be engaged in bit of domestic and foreign fence-mending.
- A. In speech on 21 February he sought to emphasize achievements of UAR in Syria (where he now visiting with Tito), and to underline Arab nationalism's mission to bring about "social revolution."

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1. This pretty clearly result of much Syrian grumbling over the practical results of the Union with Egypt and of competition being offered Nasir by leftist revolutionary regime in Iraq.
- B. In same speech, Nasir sought to reassure audience that differences with the USSR have not brought about any lessening of Soviet support.
 1. For ammunition Nasir cited a Khrushchev letter reaffirming the Soviet Premier's support of the UAR. (This letter was in answer to a request sent by Nasir for an explanation of Khrushchev's views.)
- C. Despite Soviet assurances and Nasir's conciliatory tone, basic struggle between UAR and Soviet Union for control of Iraq seems almost certain to continue.